"those enduring matinee idols"

A CHRONOLOGICAL LOOK
AT SOUND SERIALS
(1929 - 1956)

CHAPTER 27
VOLUME 3 - NUMBER 7

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PEGGY STEWART in SON OF ZORRO reports on her "Republic Years".

THE WHISPERING SHADOW (1933) with Bela Lugosi revisited.

YOU'LL FIND THEM ALL
In This Chapter of TEMI!

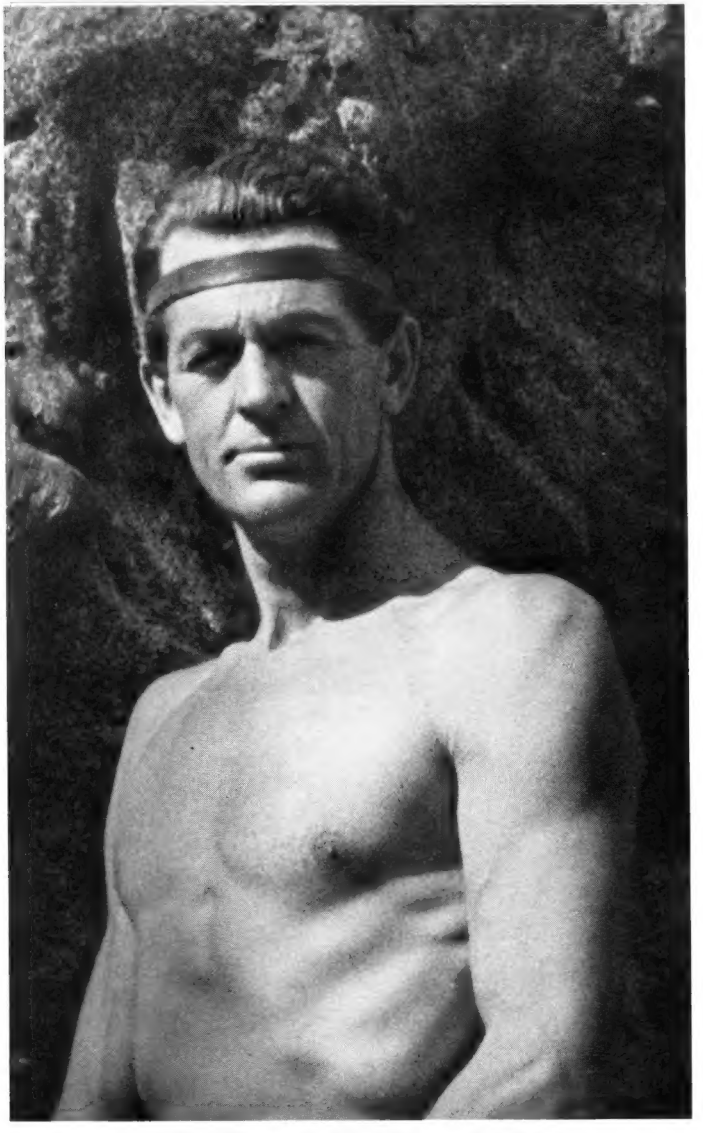
Falling, "Man of Action" TED MAPES doubling Herman Brix in DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE.

FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE — Carol Hughes attacked by one of Ming's Robots.

MASTHEAD: John Carroll in ZORRO RIDES AGAIN (Rep., '37); Lee Powell in THE FIGHTING DEVIL DOGS (Rep., '38).

MEN OF ACTION

By HARRY SANFORD / Photos Courtesy of TED MAPES



Ted Mapes doubling Herman Brix in
HAWK OF THE WILDERNESS (Rep., '38).

To tell the story of **Ted Mapes** is to recall some of the most colorful and halcyon days of Hollywood, when the making of films was fun, instead of the downsliding conglomerate business it has become today. For those who knew those days it is truly a time to remember. For those who don't, TEMI provides the rich walk down memory lane with Ted Mapes story.

The beginning was in St. Edward, Nebraska, November 25, 1901. His father John H. Mapes was the first man to raise wheat in that part of the country. "We always kept 75 to 100 head of cattle and 'bout half as many horses and mules on the ranch. My brother Chet broke them to drive and I broke them to ride. I guess I learned to ride about as soon as I learned to walk; rope, too."

But after a time of growing to well over six feet, and deciding that there was more to do than farm, young Ted headed West to seek fame and fortune in California. "Why not?" he thought. "Everybody else seems to be doing it." At that time Ted had no thoughts of Hollywood or the movies, just the idea of California and what it seemed to be was the "grabber" that brought him West. A tall, strapping, strong as an ox young man, now 28 years old, Ted drove a truck on the Signal Hills Oil Fields in Long Beach; then drove a van for a moving and storage company in Los Angeles.

One day Ted was assigned to move all of John Barrymore's baggage and equipment out of the United Artists studios (the Goldwyn lot) on Formosa Avenue to Barrymore's home in Beverly Hills. While so engaged, he met the lot "grip" boss, Alex Hume. "I was only getting $33.50 a week breaking my back. Grips were getting twice and sometimes three times that amount. I said: "Hey, I'd like to get in on this." Hume remembered the tall man and within six months he was working in the Plaster Shop. Three weeks later he was a Grip Boss and worded on "Taming of the Shrew" with Doug Fairbanks and Mary Pickford (1929).

For several years Ted worked at the Goldwyn lot as well as the various independents on and along Poverty Row. "You had to know what you were doing, and do it fast, because they didn't have the time or money to do things like the majors. You really earned your 'spurs' with those fellows." Among those independents Ted Mapes referred to was Nat Levine, head of Mascot Pictures, still encamped on Santa Monica Blvd., but shortly to take over the bankrupt Mack Sennett studio in North Hollywood.

"I was Head Grip on Tom Mix's last picture, THE MIRACLE RIDER, and did likewise for Gene Autry's first starring role in the serial THE PHANTOM EMPIRE. We had a real great bunch of guys on the crew."

* * *

It was Joe Kane (who became a full-fledged director in 1935 with "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" starring Gene Autry and Lucile Browne) that first saw possibilities as an actor for Ted and shot some footage of him on horseback from "short ends" — that is, unused film still in the camera.

By now the "bug" had bitten Ted somewhat and the thought that being in front of the camera as a western actor was a lot more fun, and paid off a great deal more, stuck in his mind. Interestingly, the screenplay writer on "Tumbleweeds" was Ford Beebe. He departed for Columbia Studios when Mascot, and others, merged into Republic. At his suggestion, Ted went to Columbia in the latter part of 1935 armed with some footage and got a screen test. Everyone liked what they saw: a superb horseman, tall, rangy in the vein of Gary Cooper.

Ted recalled: "Only one hitch. Columbia had recently signed a fellow to a contract replacing the departed Tim McCoy. Ford Beebe told me not to worry. The guy will never make it . . . can't ride a lick. His name: **Charles Starrett.** Well, they had him for four pictures and then he'd be gone for sure and I would be it. Since he couldn't ride they asked me to double him, and I guess that's how I got started doing things in front of the camera."

Ted Mapes doubled Starrett for nearly nine years, but only once as the Durango Kid (in 1940). It was not until the mid-40's when Starrett (then doubled by Jock Mahoney) exclusively portrayed the blacked garbed rider until his retirement in the early 50's. When he was not doubling Starrett, or doing featured roles in pictures, Ted would go back to gripping. "You could do it in those days," Ted said fondly. "The Unions were not nearly so rigid."

"In the early part of 1937, I went up to Utah to rig THE PAINTED STALLION and that's where Bill Witney took over from Ray Taylor and the start of his career as a top notch action director. I had known Bill from the Mascot days. He had worked his way up from office boy, script clerk and film editor."

When THE LONE RANGER was being readied for production in the fall of 1937, Ted tried to land the role. He had footage shot and stills made to show his prowess as a horseman, but to no avail. Lee Powell was chosen and serial history was made. But Bill Witney had not forgotten Ted and used him to double actor Herman Brix in two of the all time classic serials ever made, HAWK OF THE WILDERNESS (1938) and DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE (1939). Between the two serials, he had a small, though billed part, in THE LONE RANGER RIDES AGAIN.

WILDERNESS was made at Mammoth Lakes and really opened up serials, taking full advantage of the great outdoors. DAREDEVILS provided great action and plot. "I did that one with George DeNormand (doubling Charles Quigley) and Jimmy Fawcett (doubling Dave Sharpe). "That was funny, as Dave was about the best that ever was, but since he had a running part all through the picture, they were not about to take any chances on him getting hurt."

Herman Brix has been "hoisted" to tree limb for close-up shot in HAWK OF THE WILDERNESS. Note director Bill Witney in lower right corner.

Ted Mapes, doubling Brix, makes actual leap from tree.

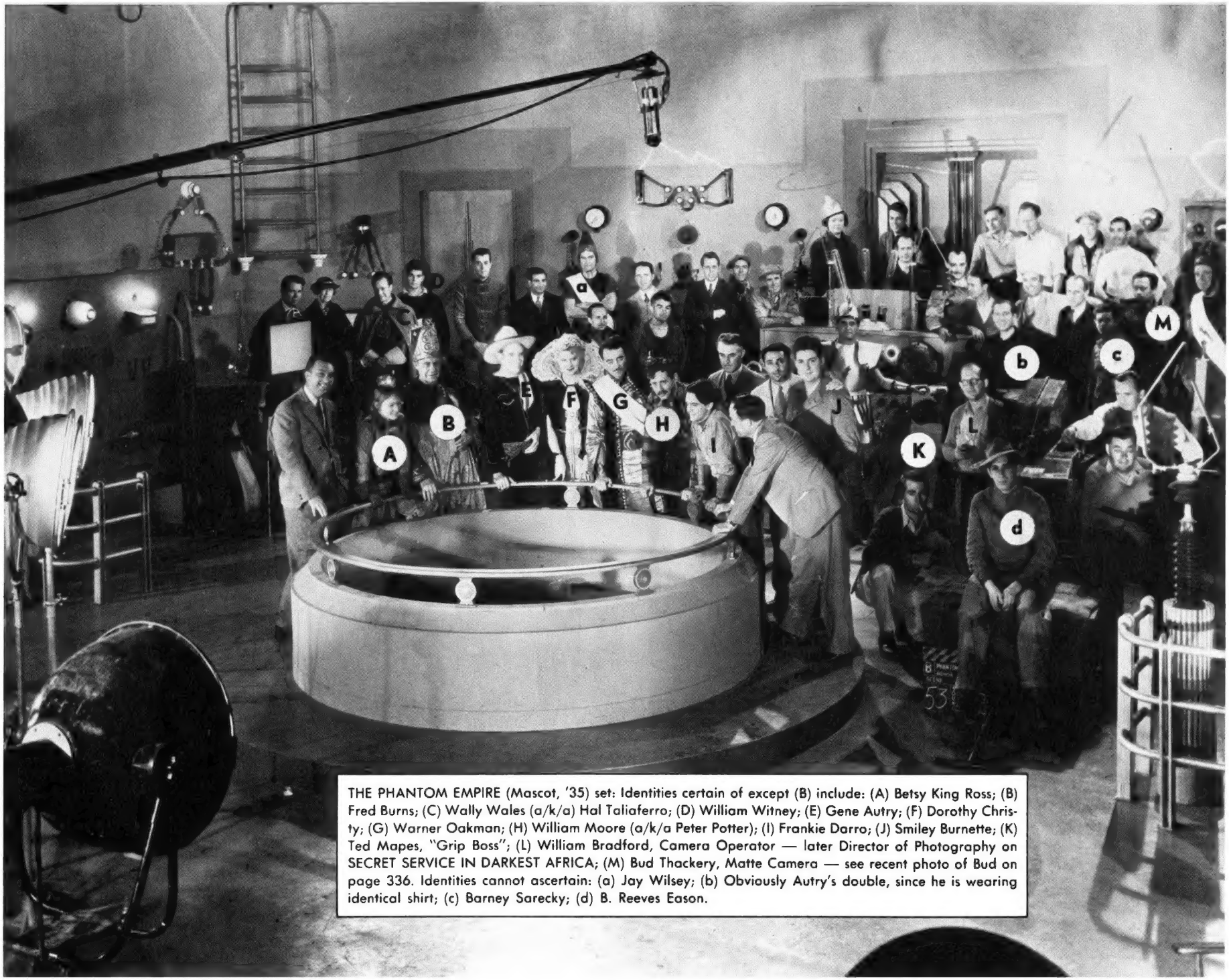
While at Columbia (in 1938) doing "THE GREAT ADVENTURES OF WILD BILL HICKOK" as Gordon (later Bill) Elliott's double, the screen's future Red Ryder called Ted aside. "He asked me about a slow mount that I did and was sort of my trademark. He admired the way I did it and asked if I'd show him. Well, I walked him down the other end of the back lot — didn't want that gang of wolves to see the star of a picture, supposed to be a top cowboy, being taught something about riding. But Bill was a good and willing person and became with work and patience one of the best riders in the business!"

L. to R. (seated): Phylis Isley, Ralph Byrd, Ted Pearson (on desk) and Kenneth Harlan. Mapes is standing in front of door.

More serials followed, DICK TRACY'S G-MEN (1939) and KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED (1941) to name a pair. And Westerns, of course. But once again the "almost, but not quite" stigma fell upon Ted Mapes. Republic had purchased the rights to Fred Harmon's comic strip series, Red Ryder, and they were looking for a leading man with riding ability to portray the lanky cowboy. If ever there was a natural for the part, it was Ted Mapes. "It looked like I had it in the palm of my hand. But with just 48 hours till shooting time (March, 1940), production head Sol Siegel left word that Herb Yates, president of Republic, had decided on Don Barry. And that was it!"

What might have been is always open to speculation. For Don "Red" Barry it meant stardom; for Ted Mapes it was a rough break, but he did not resent it and simply went back to work.

Mapes "jumping" for Herman Brix in DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE (Rep., '39).



THE PHANTOM EMPIRE (Mascot, '35) set: Identities certain of except (B) include: (A) Betsy King Ross; (B) Fred Burns; (C) Wally Wales (a/k/a) Hal Taliaferro; (D) William Witney; (E) Gene Autry; (F) Dorothy Christy; (G) Warner Oakman; (H) William Moore (a/k/a Peter Potter); (I) Frankie Darro; (J) Smiley Burnette; (K) Ted Mapes, "Grip Boss"; (L) William Bradford, Camera Operator — later Director of Photography on SECRET SERVICE IN DARKEST AFRICA; (M) Bud Thackery, Matte Camera — see recent photo of Bud on page 336. Identities cannot ascertain: (a) Jay Wilsey; (b) Obviously Autry's double, since he is wearing identical shirt; (c) Barney Sarecky; (d) B. Reeves Eason.

Scene from THE LONE RANGER RIDES AGAIN (Rep., '39). L. to R.: Duncan Renaldo, Bob Livingston, Ted Mapes, Eddie Dean, Henry Otho, actor. Rex Lease is standing in cellar entrance.

When Paramount Studios purchased Ernest Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls", director Sam Wood wanted three people in one — a stand-in, photographic double and action double — for star Gary Cooper. Someone mentioned Ted. He was called in, looked over by Woods and Cooper, and the latter nodded his head and characteristically said: "Yup." Ted had worked previously in Sergeant York, doubling Cooper and doing various stunts during the battle scenes directed by Breezy Eason. That was the real beginning of a seventeen picture association and friendship with the tall man from Montana until his death of cancer in 1961. "Coop was a fine rider and could do almost anything. But he'd broken his hip and back as a youngster and it caused him a lot of trouble." Among such epics that Mapes doubled Cooper were "Along Came Jones", "Story of Doctor Wassell", "Saratoga Trunk", "Unconquered" and "Blowing Wild". Ted even turned to directing, In "Saratoga Trunk" Cooper and his men, coming one way by rail, jump off at each station to capture it from the rivals coming the other way.

Ted doubling Cooper leaped through a depot glass (candy) window, and did battle with several heavies. Then came the climatic smash up when the two trains hit each other head on. "That was done in miniature, but the actual massed gang battle, I directed and doubled Coop. I'll tell you, it was really something."

Mapes did not forsake serials. He did BLACK ARROW ('44) and THE MONSTER AND THE APE ('45) for Columbia; then, under Spencer Bennet's direction, appeared in Republic's DAUGHTER OF DON Q and THE BLACK WIDOW in '46 and '47 respectively. In 1948 he returned to Columbia to double Smith Ballew in TEX GRANGER, while old friend George DeNormand did likewise for Robert Kellard.

Looking back, Mapes vividly recollects director Joe Kane calling upon him to double John Wayne for a scene in "Dakota" (1945).

"There was this scene where Cliff Lyons, Freddie Graham and Jack Roper pitch Wayne down the front steps of a house. Well I, of course, did the take, and Joe asked for it one more time. I really hurt my shoulder and told the guys about it later. Fred asked me where and I showed him. Fred just hauled back and whammed me flush on the spot. It felt better afterwards, but hurt like hell then!"

In 1950 Ted Mapes began a stint with another giant of the screen, Jimmy Stewart. Delmar Daves (writer/director) asked him if he would like to come down to Arizona and double Stewart in "Broken Arrow". He naturally said "yes" and began yet another career and friendship that started with that picture clear through to "Bandolero" in 1968.

Finally in 1969, Ted Mapes called it a day from acting, but not his life in the film industry. Shortly after he went to work for the American Humane Association, serving as advisor on all films where animals are used. "Worked on both 'Ben' and 'Willard'," he smiled. "Darn little rats would freeze to death and we had to make sure their 'dressing rooms' were properly heated."

At this writing, Ted was reunited with his long time friend, Bill Witney, directing some of the TV segments of the "Cowboys" series.

As to his favorites in the business, Ted says as they all do: "Bill Witney, Jack English and Spence Bennet were the best. Nobody could top them in serials or Republic for making them. Columbia treated serials like a poor stepchild, never using their best talent, and really farming them out to Katzman to make. I never made any serials for Universal, so I don't know about them. At Republic it was a way of life and the best. Also Joe Kane for action. He knew what it was all about. Best actor to work with in fights, Johnny Mack Brown. Just super!

"It's been a lot of fun for me to have been part of, and if I gave any pleasure to TEMI readers I am most grateful, even if I was usually a bad guy."

A bad guy on the screen sometimes . . . a great guy in real life all the time.

DIRECTORS

WITNEY / ENGLISH

Addendum by Bob Malcomson

Mention was made of Louis Germonprez, an assistant director, on page 353 by both director William Witney and stuntman David Sharpe. Germonprez ". . . was the man who invented the 'breakdown board' . . . and today it's used by every major studio in the world, or anyone making a motion picture."

In photo below, discussing production details on KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED (Rep., '40) are . . .

producer Hiram S. Brown, Jr.; director John (Jack) English; Germonprez, standing in front of his famous 'breakdown board' detailing scene-by-scene shooting sequence for the serial; and, Bill Witney. (Photo courtesy of Mr. Witney.)

John English passed away October 11, 1969 at age 66. He began as a film cutter, then director, before joining forces with Witney and co-directing some of the most memorable sound serials ever produced — all for Republic Pictures.

For the record: Witney and English worked together on 17 consecutive serials commencing with ZORRO RIDES AGAIN (1937) and winding-up with DICK TRACY vs CRIME, INC. (1941). Witney's first serial, THE PAINTED STALLION, was with Alan James after he replaced, during shooting, Ray Taylor. He and James then, in 1937, did SOS COAST GUARD. In 1942 Witney alone directed SPY SMASHER, PERILS OF NYOKA, KING OF THE MOUNTIES — and G-MEN vs. THE BLACK DRAGON (1943). Then English returned to do his final two serials: DAREDEVILS OF THE WEST ('43) and CAPTAIN AMERICA (1944, with Elmer Clifton sharing honors). Witney forsook serials with THE CRIMSON GHOST (1946, co-directed by Fred C. Brannon).

Adapted for TEMI by WILLIAM C. CLINE

CHAPTER TITLES

1. The Purple Death
2. Freezing Torture
3. Walking Bombs
4. The Destroying Ray
5. The Palace of Peril
6. Flaming Death
7. Land of the Dead
8. The Fiery Abyss
9. The Pool of Peril
10. The Death Mist
11. Stark Treachery
12. Doom of the Dictator

SUPPORTING CAST

Prince Barin	Roland Drew
Princess Aura	Shirley Deane
Thong	Victor Zimmerman
Torch	Don Rowan
Karm	Michael Mark
Korro	Sigurd Nilssen
Roka	Lee Powell
Capt. Sudan	William Royle
Lupi	Ben Taggart
Rock King	Ray Mala
Prof. Gordon	John Hamilton

Also Byron Foulger, Bryant Washburn and Tom Chatterton.

A ravaging plague has thrown the Earth into panic! Known as the Purple Death, it leaves only a purple spot on the foreheads of its victims. As the world's greatest scientists search for ways to combat the dread malady, the sportsman-adventurer son of one of them — Flash Gordon — has joined forces with his old friend and comrade-in-arms, Doctor Zarkov, Earth's foremost inventor and scientific mind, to find out how it is being spread. Assisted by Flash's fiance, lovely Dale Arden, they have gone up in Zarkov's rocketship to find out if it might be coming from outer space.

The astonished trio discover a familiar-looking interplanetary space ship discharging a mysterious dust that becomes invisible as it falls. Although thought dead, Ming the Merciless, Emperor of the planet Mongo, has sent the ship on its lethal mission in another attempt to destroy the Earth. The Earth people are attacked by the invading craft and their ship goes down, but Flash Gordon prevents it from crashing. Thinking it crashed, the evil emissaries from Mongo head for home to tell Ming the good news that they have destroyed his old adversary Doctor Zarkov.

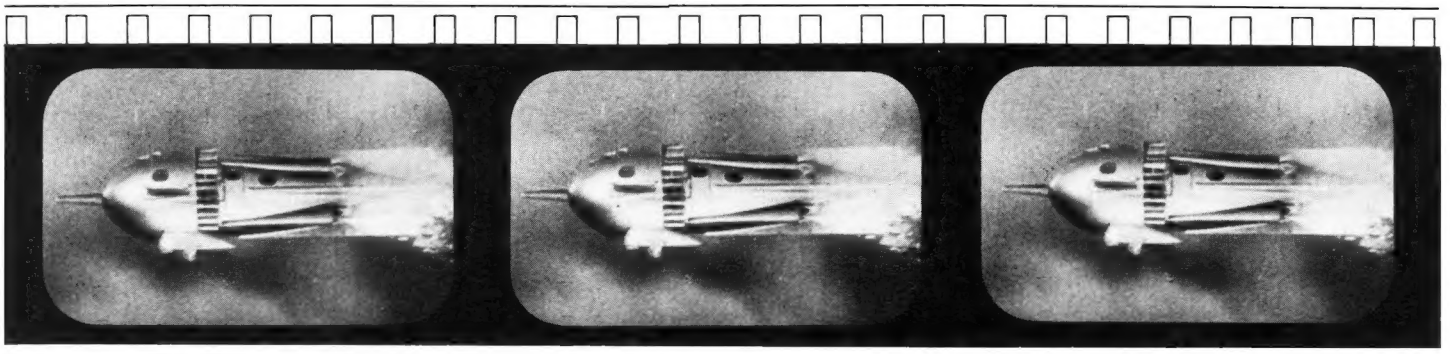
"But Ming will send other ships to scatter that fiendish dust," predicts Zarkov.

"Yes, I know," muses Flash, "our only chance is to get to Mongo, find Prince Barin, and solicit his aid."

Zarkov reports to Earth by radio and tells them what they plan to do. The valiant trio are off again on another adventure against their old foe, the most wicked despot in the universe — Ming the Merciless.

The fertile kingdom of Arboria on the planet Mongo is ruled by Prince Barin and his beautiful wife, Princess Aura, who is the daughter of Ming. Reformed by Barin's love and the realization that her father is a hopeless madman bent only on destruction, Aura has cast her lot with Barin and his people and provides a genuinely warm welcome for the visitors from Earth when they arrive.

Another visitor to Arboria is the Queen of Frigia, the Ice Kingdom of Mongo, who asks Barin and Flash to rescue her commander-in-chief, General Lupi, from Ming's dungeons. Ming's scientists have perfected the Purple Death dust so that it kills only those with intelligence enough to pose a threat to Ming, while only making slaves out of the less intelligent, and plans to experiment on Lupi. With the help of Captain Sudan, commander of Ming's palace guards who is a loyal secret spy for Barin, Flash leads a raiding party composed of Dr. Zarkov and two of Barin's most trusted officers, Captain Ronal and Captain Roka, and they infiltrate Ming's palace through underground caverns. Ronal is captured and brought to Ming, who decides to include him in the experiment; but Flash, Zarkov and Roka attack the laboratory and rescue Ronal and the Frigian captives. Enraged, Ming places a bounty on Zarkov and Flash as the triumphant rescuers return to Arboria.



Ming the Merciless.

Royal Throne Room of Ming.

L. to R.: Ronal, Zarkov, Dale, Flash, Queen of Frigia, Korro, Barin and Aura.

Fight leading up to climax of chapter one.

Sonja and Captain Torch.

Roka, Flash, Dale and the Rock Men.

Grateful for Lupi's rescue, the Queen of Frigia grants Zarkov and Flash the right to mine a mineral called Polarite, the antedote to the death dust, in her frozen kingdom, the only place it can be found. Despite the almost-lethal cold of the Ice Kingdom, Zarkov heads an expedition to locate and extract the precious element so it can be rushed to Earth to save civilization. Ming dispatches bombers to destroy the expedition and capture Flash and Zarkov. Their bombs cause an avalanche that traps Flash, Dale and Barin, but the loyal persistence of Dr. Zarkov rescues them from injury and icy death.

A furious Ming then dispatches remotely-controlled robots, called "annihilatants," to finish what his bombers started. Although not susceptible to the withering cold of Frigia, and being almost indestructible weapons (mounted with explosives, they are actually walking bombs), the metal men also fail to kill the dauntless Earthmen, but Ming's soldiers abduct Dale Arden and Dr. Zarkov and take them to the evil Emperor. He demands Zarkov's help in conquering the universe, but the scientist rebukes his demands.

On a mission of mercy, Flash Gordon flies back to earth and deposits the life-saving Polarite on top of Mt. McKinley. Returning to Mongo, Flash commandeers a Ming rocketship and, dressed as Ming's guards, gains access with Roka to Ming's palace. There he finds Dr. Zarkov manacled and facing death for his defiance of Ming. A deadly destroying ray threatens to kill the trapped scientist, but Flash and Roka destroy the machine, saving his life. Although they break through to safety, Flash and the Arborian officer are unable to rescue Dale and the Doctor.

The treacherous Ming plans to force Dale Arden to become his unwilling bride, and tricks Dr. Zarkov into agreeing to work in his laboratory. The Earth scientist becomes a friend of Professor Karm, whom Ming has also imprisoned and forced into service, along with captive scientists from other planets. While Flash and Roka bravely re-enter the palace and cleverly rescue Dale, Zarkov and Karm devise a means of communicating with Flash by radio. Then, using a disguise prepared by one of the captured scientists, Dr. Zarkov escapes and joins Flash and the others at Ming's spaceport. They blast off in a Ming ship, but are attacked by Prince Barin, who is leading an attack force and is not aware the ship contains his friends. A blast hits the craft, crippling it. Flash signals Barin from the damaged rocketship, and Barin rescues Roka and the Earth people using a magnetic grappling hook.

Back in Arboria, Dr. Zarkov describes a new weapon he learned about as a captive: Ming plans to fire projectiles of Zotronillium — a "fire metal" which burns with the heat of the sun when exposed to oxygen and cannot be extinguished - first at Arboria and then at the Earth. Zarkov develops as a defense weapon a contrathermal machine that can combat the extremely high temperature of the fires and hopefully extinguish them.

Ming contacts his spy in Barin's palace, the Lady Sonja, and orders her to lure her mistress, Princess Aura, out of the city. The Princess is ambushed and kidnapped by her father's soldiers and taken to Ming's palace. The wily Emperor orders Sonja and Captain Torch, his chief aide, back to Arboria to cripple the radio station, so that news of projectile landings cannot be transmitted.

When Ming begins firing his Zotronillium projectiles, Flash, Dale and Ronal rush to the impact site of one and battle the fires with the contrathermal machine. Although highly successful, the machine receives damage and Flash is nearly killed in a cavern of fire. Narrowly escaping death, he manages to counteract the other Zotronillium blasts until Ming has no more projectiles to fire.

Taking the offensive, Dr. Zarkov finishes work on a weapon he has perfected to use against Ming. He calls it a Nullitrion and explains that it is a very deadly military weapon.

"The difficulty is that, in launching its neutralizing cartridge, the gun destroys itself," he warns, "and the explosion releases a poisonous gas that will destroy all life over a wide area."

He and the others plan to transport the weapon to a desolate, uninhabited area that lies to the west of Ming's city known as the Land of the Dead. From there, it can be fired into the castle and neutralize by magnetic force Ming's power plants, thus rendering his guns and ships useless.

Captain Torch radios Ming and is ordered to beat the Earthmen to the Land of the Dead and plant the explosive mines at the only site suitable to base Zarkov's weapon. He and Sonja, assisted by another spy named Thong, rig a timing device to explode the mines, but are attacked and captured by mysterious Rock Men, who inhabit the area in secret. When Flash, Zarkov and the Arborians arrive at the site, they too are attacked by Rock Men. While they battle, the mines explode, causing landslides and quakes. Flash, Dale and Zarkov are knocked unconscious by falling debris.

The Rock Men blame the Earth people for the explosions and take them captive to the Rock King, eluding vicious monsters called Iguantheons on the way. The Rock King holds them responsible for the death of his son, whom he believes killed in the landslides, and orders them imprisoned. Dale Arden is caught contacting Karm by radio in a plea for help, and is sentenced to die. Flash and Zarkov devise a clever escape and valiantly rescue the Rock King's son, who was trapped by the quakes on a high ledge, inaccessible because of a strong magnetic wave exuding from a mysterious lodestone in the mountainside, which Flash dislodges and destroys. They return the young man to his father, who grants them freedom in gratitude for his son's return.

Sonja and Captain Torch try to escape but are caught by Flash and his allies, who hold them hostage as possible exchanges for the Princess Aura.

In a daring attempt to rescue Princess Aura from her father's clutches, Flash and Barin head a rescue party and enter Ming's underground caverns with the help of Captain Sudan. They narrowly miss death as Ming discovers their presence and floods the tunnels, only to have the water diverted by Sudan as the Emperor leaves the laboratory gloating. The would-be rescuers return to Arboria empty-handed.

Later Ming discovers Professor Karm's secret radio and has a henchman send a false message to Barin, telling him Ming has no immediate plans for attack. Instead, he sends gas bombers to bomb Barin's palace and orders Torch and Sonja, who have escaped and made radio contact with their Emperor, to call in Barin's patrol ships so there will be no warning of the attack. Flash discovers Torch's trickery and chases the Ming officer and the treacherous Sonja into a castle tower. The two men lock in mortal combat as Ming's bombers drop their evil cargo. A gas bomb explodes and Flash falls from the tower into the palace moat, where he is revived by the water.

Sonja and Thong abduct Dale and Ronal, but Captain Torch is taken prisoner by Prince Barin's men. Ming, furious at the capture of his commander, contacts Barin and offers to exchange Dale and Ronal for Torch's release. Flash and Barin agree, but Ming doublecrosses them by drugging Dale, so that Dr. Zarkov is again imprisoned in the laboratory, and Dale is placed with Princess Aura in a room guarded by a fiendishly clever electrical trap in the rug.

Again aided by Captain Sudan, Flash and Barin gain entry to the palace of Ming through ancient, abandoned burial caverns and make their way to the room where Dale and Aura are held captive. Flash escapes death from the electrically-charged rug by a timely warning from Dale, and leads Prince Barin and the girls to Ming's laboratory, where the resourceful Dr. Zarkov barricades the doors and commandeers the vital source of all of Ming's power — a strong beam of light reflected from an element called Thillinium, which energizes the Purple Death dust, the great fire projectiles, and all of Ming's death-dealing weapons.

Mad with rage, Ming surrounds the laboratory with troops and calls Dr. Zarkov on the televisor to demand surrender. Zarkov defies him, telling the vicious dictator that his and Flash Gordon's mission is not only to save the world, but the universe as well.

"The universe?" scoffs Ming. "I am the universe! I'll give you just one hour to surrender! I have another source of power that you know nothing of!"

The other source of power is Solarite, a new and powerful explosive that Ming has loaded into a space ship to be flown to Earth for attack on its principal cities. In a desperate plan, Flash leaves the laboratory by a secret passage and commandeers the Solarite ship. He blasts off and circles the area while Zarkov and the others flee to Barin's rocketship and take off. As soon as his friends are aloft, Flash sets the controls of the Solarite-laden ship toward the control tower where the terrified Ming has fled, and transfers by parachute to Prince Barin's rocketship. The tower is demolished when the ship crashes into it!

As they fly toward the safety of Arboria and then back to Earth, Prince Barin tells Flash:

"By destroying Ming, you have saved the universe."

"In his mad ambition, Ming declared that he was the universe," replies Flash quietly.

"Then, since you are the conqueror of Ming," proclaims a proud Dr. Zarkov, "I shall radio your father: 'Flash Gordon conquers the universe!'."

". . . And Saves the Earth," adds a smiling Dale Arden.

THE END

THE REPUBLIC YEARS /

by PEGGY STEWART
as told to
C. M. Parkhurst

NOTES by C. M. Parkhurst

Peggy Stewart graciously consented to reminisce with TEMI readers concerning her long career in films, and in particular **The Republic Years**, while guest of honor at the '73 Western Film Collectors Festival held in Memphis, Tenn.

It would be a serious omission on my part not to mention that Ms. Stewart displayed unflagging vitality and a disarming sense of humor; the salt and pepper hair being the only clue that more than 25 years have passed since she rode the Republic range with Allan Lane, Sunset Carson and other western stars.

While at Republic Studios she appeared in two serials, then later went to Columbia and played the heroine in two more. Titles and photos from all four are interspersed throughout her narrative.

Formerly married to Don "Red" Barry, who is the father of her oldest son, Michael, Ms. Stewart is now married to actor-singer Buck Young. They have two children, Abigail and Gregory.

Publicity still of a very young Peggy Stewart.

PROLOGUE

When did it all begin? It was in 1936 when I first came to California. My grandmother stayed with me so I could attend dramatic school. Living in the same apartment building was a wonderful old character actor named Henry O'Neill who was under contract to Warner Bros. He had been loaned out to Paramount to do "Wells Fargo" and the director, Frank Lloyd, was looking for someone to play Joel McCrea's and Frances Dee's daughter in the picture. Mr. O'Neill talked them into testing me. I was lucky enough to get the part, and that's when it all started. From Paramount I went over to Universal for a Deanna Durbin picture, "That Certain Age", and the first "Little Tough Guys" feature with Jackie Searle and David Gorcey, Leo's brother. Leo wasn't in it but both Huntz Hall and Gabe Dell were.

In 1944, the move to westerns wasn't too difficult because I'd been riding since I was a child of nine or ten in Atlanta. At one time I rode in competition for the Judy King Stables. It was all English riding where we were judged on our equestrianship — the elbows are tucked in, the stirrups swing free, back straight, etc. An English saddle is very thin and it's easy to feel the horse under you, but then I got into westerns and, my gosh, there's a lot of saddle between you and the horse! Polly Burson, who did most of my doubling, was the one who helped me look more like a cowgirl.

REPUBLIC YEARS • 1944 - 1947

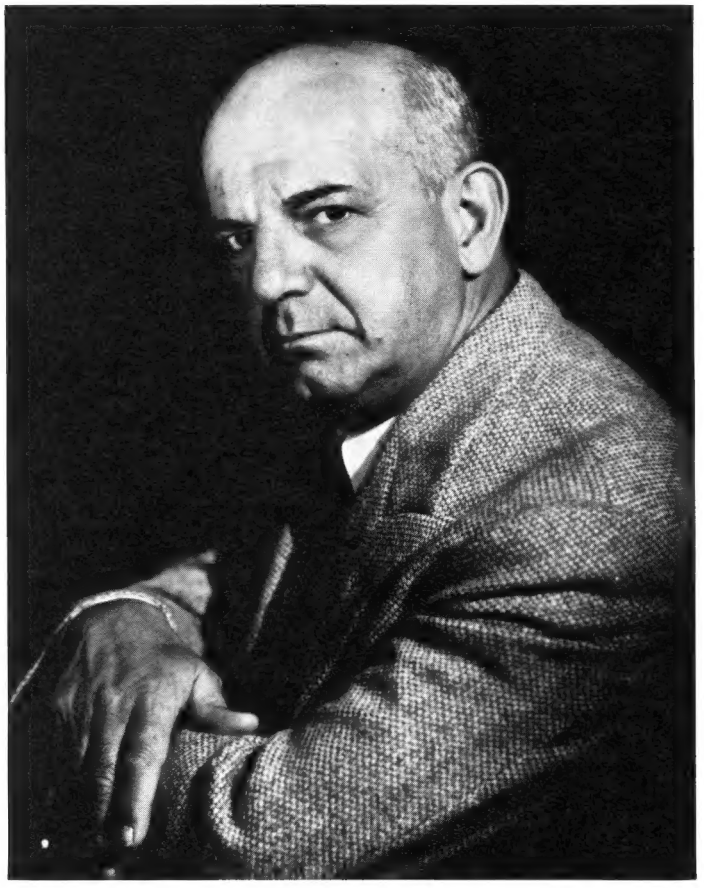
When actors discuss the Republic phase of their careers one word consistently comes up: family. And it's true, we were a family! Oh, there might be times when you'd envy your brother or sister but you certainly didn't cut-throat them. You were happy when they got ahead and you plugged for one another. The cowboys were great with each other and as for the cowgirls, the only fight they had was trying to control their horses.

Republic was top-notch all the way; the directors, producers, crews, all were the best. We couldn't begin to compete with other studios on upper bracket films but for low budget pictures, Republic could not be beaten. The quality started right at the top with Herbert Yates, president of the studio, who gave each employee an incentive to do his or her best. When a man was moved up, especially to director, the crew took him under its wing and taught him shortcuts. You know, the real villains in pictures don't have black hats and a mustache — the **real villains** are time, pressure and budget, and it was the crews that knew how to beat them.

They seldom reshuffled shooting schedules at Republic. The only reason would be bad weather and then we'd move indoors where the work was slower. Columbia worked with the same problems but when they took a short cut it showed up in the finished film.

Herbert Yates was a dear friend. Besides being my boss we had a close, personal relationship. I think everyone loved him — even Gene (Autry), which was funny because they were 'friendly enemies' in the business field. They each had respect for the other; in fact, both would have been disappointed if the other hadn't been as sly as possible. They used to play sort of a 'Mata Hari' game. Yates was not a totally educated man. He worked his way up to head of Consolidated Film Industries before taking over control of Republic. When someone was selling out it was always Yates' spies vs. Autry's spies to see who would get the majority stock — and Gene usually lost. Working with Gene was like working with the stock market. Business was his life and acting secondary as far as he was concerned. I'm sure he would have loved to own Republic Pictures.

George J. Lewis, Peggy Stewart and Robert Kent in THE PHANTOM RIDER (Rep., '46).



Herbert J. Yates.

Poppa Yates and Bill Elliott went into business ventures together and Elliott once lost his shirt on a gold mine they invested in. But for me personally, Mr. Yates always had a hug and a pat on the head. When I wanted to leave the studio he called me into his office and we talked for a very long time. He was very protective and warned me: "Now, Peg, it's a cold world out there." It really was for my own benefit and not to hold me to the studio. I'm sure they'd have had no trouble getting someone to replace me.

In the few years prior to Mr. Yates' passing, Don Barry called him a number of times but either Vera (Ralston) or her mother would answer the phone and Poppa Yates never got the messages. Don even went up to the house once but the servant wouldn't let him in. Evidently, Vera, her mother and family kept him in the background and he just sort of disintegrated. To do that without knowing that you're still loved and people are still trying to reach you, is really very sad.

Since Republic ceased motion picture production there has been talk that Mr. Yates' pushing of Vera Ralston and her films had a lot to do with the company's decline. That's something I couldn't say for certain. She studied hard, took dramatic and dancing lessons and did all the technically proper things she was told to do. But you either have or don't have that inate quality that makes an actress, and Vera didn't have it. All her pictures were big budget — extremely big compared with the westerns we were making. Still, she didn't have the respect of the crews and Mr. Yates couldn't give her that.

I have wonderful memories of the casts and crews who worked in the westerns and serials. For instance, Edmund Cobb and Terry Frost were great whittlers. While sitting around on the set between takes, they'd pick up a piece of balsa wood used in the breakaway furniture and out would come their pocket knives. The unusual thing was they always carved the same thing: Cobb carved small boxes with three little round balls inside that were loose but too large to get out; Frost made pins, earrings and rings with a carved replica of his fist on them.

Now, if you wanted to place a bet on a horserace, football game, or anything else, Kenne Duncan was the guy to see. He was our bookie and a gambler at heart. It may be because he had such a hard life. It involved sailing ships and the Orient in the days when you had to know how to take care of yourself. Kenne was very well liked and it was a sad day when I learned of his passing.

Another great personal loss was the passing of Tom London. He was like my father. We made many personal appearance tours together and those times when Sunset (Carson) didn't show up Tom and I would talk with the people and get some of them up on stage for audience participation skits. Tom had some fruit trees on his property and since we were close neighbors he and his sister, Anita, and I used to have popcorn nights when we did some preserving. It was another of the little extras that became part of my life and made me love the man.

(Editor's Note: See page 134 for photo of Ms. Stewart, Tom London and Edmund Cobb in SON OF ZORRO.)

I didn't work a lot with George J. Lewis (Editor's Note: See interview with Mr. Lewis on pgs. 273-75.), but one of my closest friends, Catalina Lawrence, was a script girl at Republic and George is her godfather. Through her I became personally associated with George. He was always so kind and sweet and loving, and I thought very handsome. And he's much handsomer now with that beautiful white hair and perpetual tan. The crew always played practical jokes and gags on George, not to a point where it held up production, but it was their way of showing someone how well liked he was, and everyone liked George. You can see what I mean when I say more than a job was involved in our relationships at Republic.

Every once in a while I'm asked to pick a favorite leading man. Anybody or anything that you've given a little more of yourself to, rather than just your work, is much closer to you. Having done more pictures with Bill Elliott and Sunset Carson than anyone else, I'd have to name them.

Allan Lane? I don't mean to sound unkind, but he was the **dullest** man I ever met. Truly, I think the main problem with Allan was that he had absolutely no sense of humor — none at all. I was known to be kind of round in the 'derriere' and so was Allan, so I nicknamed him "Bubblebutt" and he didn't think that was a bit funny. While anything like that you said in jest, it didn't get through to him at all. So, you just took Allan for what he was. As an actor doing his business or trade, he was 100% professional.

Choosing a favorite heavy is also easy: Roy Barcroft is the immediate choice. I don't know of anyone else who could play opposite you and with a single facial expression convey complete cynicism. He was just great.

Roy Barcroft, George Turner and Stewart
in SON OF ZORRO (Rep., '47).

Fred Graham, one of our top stuntmen, is now working for the State of Arizona. (Editor's Note: See interview with Mr. Graham on pgs. 332-33.). It took him six years to cut through the legal red tape, arrange insurance, get casts and crews to Arizona and still make it all fit into the budget. Freddie worked out a special deal with Washington which was acceptable to all the trade unions. As a matter of fact, I just finished a picture in Patagonia, Arizona, called "The No Mercy Man" which will be released theatrically very soon.

The pace was no faster on serials than features, just a longer shooting schedule. For me, serials were less interesting work because it took 5 or 6 weeks to shoot them, but we could shoot a western in six days and I'd get a new wardrobe and hairdo each time.

During the filming of SON OF ZORRO I was the victim of one of the crew's practical jokes. A chapter ending had me lowered into a well and disappearing under the water. Actually, the well was just a huge galvanized tank holding about four feet of water with an iron handle on the bottom. The crew hoisted me above the tank and the director said: "All right, Peg, we'll lower you down, you grab the iron rail below and keep your head under the water where you can't be seen, because the camera will be shooting way down low. Don't come up until we hit the side of the tank so you'll know the shot's completed." So, there I was, down under the water running out of breath and turning blue. I waited and waited, and nobody had hit the side of the tub. Finally, unable to take any more, I stood up — **and everyone had gone!**

Of the four serials I made, two were for Republic and two for Columbia with four different leading men: Robert Kent, George Turner, Robert Kellard and Jock Mahoney. That's the only time I worked with any of them and, with the exception of Jock, I haven't seen them since. Jock, of course, is one of our greatest stuntmen. Dave Sharpe helped Jock get started in films and Jock turned around and taught Fred Krone, who's a stunt coordinator now. Jock was always in training. He used to set up bricks in his back yard in the shape of a window and practice doing leaps and jumps through it onto the asphalt paving. Dave is about 5'9" and Jock is nearly 6'5", but Jock is faster! — which is unusual for a man his size. He's an absolute cat!

Jock O'Mahoney (a/k/a Mahoney), Dickie Moore and Stewart in CODY OF THE PONY EXPRESS (Col., '50).

The day came (in 1947) when I was called in to do another serial for Republic. I told them, "Golly, no, I don't want to do it. That's Linda Stirling's job." I was warned that not doing it could lead to a suspension and rather than face that I asked the company for a decision on whether or not they intended to move me up into B features, like those my good friend Adele Mara was starring in, or the A pictures, which only Vera Ralston and Duke Wayne were doing.

The answer came down from Al Wilson, vice president of the studio: "No! We don't intend to move you." The reason why was simple and, from their point of view, made good business sense. My acting and riding ability in westerns saved them money, or at least helped them break even on the films, so their investment in me was paying off. I was a "proven product."

So the decision had been made **for** me. I asked for a release from my contract so I could return to the type of acting I had done at the beginning of my career. If I knew the stigma attached to working for Republic when I first started at the studio it didn't hold me back, because at the time I wanted to make action pictures and what was better than working for the best — and Republic was the best. But when I left the studio I didn't get more than two calls for pictures that **were not westerns.** I'd been typecast and people couldn't see me in any other roles.

Buzz Henry, "Duke", Stewart, Robert Kellard, and Britt Wood in TEX GRANGER (Col., '48).

EPILOGUE

In 1953, it seemed the only way to break the chain was to quit acting altogether and let my name die out. About the same time I'd made the decision to quit, my husband, Buck, introduced me to a girl named June Leff. Live TV was in its infancy but going strong and June asked me to help her in setting up a casting office at N.B.C. So, for the next three years I was assistant casting director at N.B.C.'s studios until I left to have my daughter Abigail. After waiting three years to get away from westerns I accepted my first assignment — in a "Palladin" TV segment. I was right back on the buckboard again! "Have Gun, Will Travel"!

Since then I've done a variety of TV and movie rolls. At Universal to do an "Ironside", the cameraman was Bud Thackery, who did almost everything I worked in at Republic. Bud called around the lot and brought together all the boys from the early days and we had a wonderful time reminiscing.

Sunset Carson and Peggy Stewart at the '73 "Western Film Collectors" Festival.

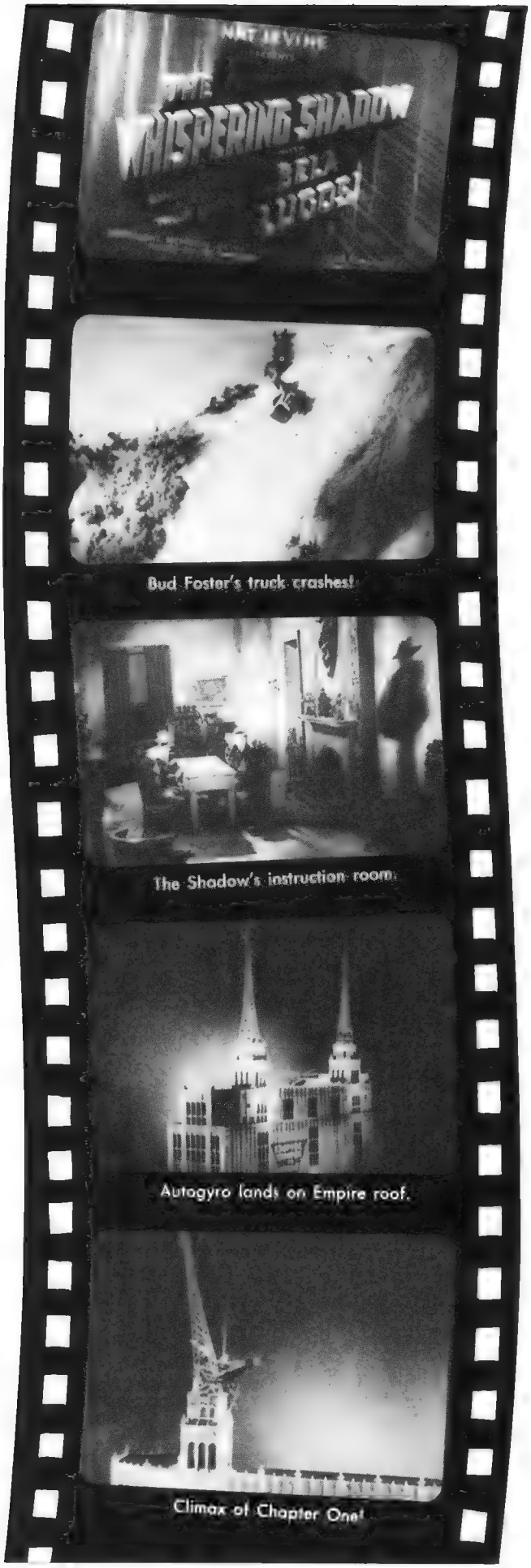
●

EDITOR'S NOTES

Unhappily for reasons of space limitations, it was necessary to omit or condense parts of Ms. Stewart's narrative. But the gist of the original story, as personally approved by her, remains unchanged.

Ms. Stewart is presently a student and substitute teacher at Lieux Dressler's Patio Playhouse which she says is "the best Actor's Training Center in the area. We never know where our future potential will come from but they would be wise to pick a place like the Patio Playhouse for guidance and training."

A freelance actress, Ms. Stewart will be seen in an upcoming segment of N.B.C.'s "Emergency" and "Chase" series; the TV movie "The Cage" with Sean McClory and Cathy Carver; and, in the theatrical film "The No Mercy Man". Watch for them!



CHAPTER TITLES

1. The Master Magician
2. The Collapsing Room
3. The All-Seeing Eye
4. The Shadow Strikes
5. Wanted for Murder
6. The Man Who Was Czar
7. The Double Doom
8. The Red Circle
9. The Fatal Secret
10. The Death Warrant
11. The Trap
12. King of the World

Directed by Albert Herman/Colbert Clark

THE CAST

Professor Adam Strang	Bela Lugosi
Vera Strang	Viva Tattersall
Jack Foster	Malcolm McGregor
Bradley	Henry B. Walthall
Robert Raymond	Robert Warwick
Alexis Steinbeck	Roy D'Arcy
Sparks	Karl Dane
Young	Lloyd Whitlock
Jasper Slade	Robert Kortman
Jerome	Lafe McKee
Bud Foster	George Lewis
Dupont	Tom London
Countess Helen	Ethel Clayton
Henchman	Jack Perrin

Written for TEMI by James Stringham
Photo Assistance: Bill Krajcik/Jim Stringham

EMPIRE TRANSPORT AND STORAGE CO.
"We Cover the World"

And so it seems. From huge wireless towers: "This is station UA of Berlin, Germany. Empire Transport and Storage Company of Berlin calling Empire Transport and Storage Company of Los Angeles, California."

But, in the super-modern Los Angeles headquarters of the world-wide Empire Company, an unknown menace is plaguing the radio directed trucks of the huge transportation organization. Traffic manager Jack Foster finds one of his truckers ready to quit rather than haul "one of them hoodlum statues." He refers to wax figures consigned to Professor Adam Strang's "House of Mystery". Four trucks carrying such cargo have been wrecked in the past month, and he has "a strong hunch The Whispering Shadow is going to strike again."

Jack accuses the trucker, Bert, of losing his nerve, and young Bud Foster volunteers to make the run. Jack hesitates, then accedes as Bert needles him about the difference if his own kid brother is driving. He makes a last minute check of the truck's wireless, then sends Bud out. Bert reminds him that the radios on the other trucks had also worked perfectly . . . until the trucks were attacked.

Later, Jack has to make a change in the route of the truck and calls Sparks, Empire's Swedish radio operator. Sparks tells him that there is something wrong with the radio. Alexis Steinbeck, head of communications, walks in to hear this and checks the equipment. He tells Jack that there seems to be some outside interference: interference like that which accompanied the previous attacks.

On the highway, Bud and a guard riding with him spot a motorcycle chasing after them. The machine pulls alongside and the guard is about to open fire with a shotgun when Bud recognizes his brother. Jack has raced to warm them of the danger of an attack. They pull off the road. As they talk, a huge shadow of a cloaked man appears on the side of the truck. An eerie, electronic hum is heard. Then, in a quiet, menacing voice, the Shadow speaks: "Stay where you are."

Cars filled with hoodlums appear from a nearby road. Jack grabs the shotgun, shouts: "Get going, Bud!" and climbs to the roof of the truck as the Shadow warns: "Fools! You cannot escape!" Bud races off, but sees cars ahead barricading the highway. He crashes through! Jack fires at the pursuing cars, killing one heavy. The leading car pulls alongside, and Jack leaps onto it.

Bud takes a bullet! Jack grabs a heavy and leaps clear — to see the truck crash to destruction!

The Shadow henchmen are about to descend to the wreck when they hear sirens. The gangsters flee. Jack turns his prisoner over to the arriving police as one of the killers of his brother.

Later, the Shadow's men take seats around a table. Their master appears; a living silhouette on the wall. "You have cause to fear my anger, you cowards. Through your failure, Krueger is in the hands of the police."

Krueger is enduring the third degree, continually protesting that he does not know the true identity of The Whispering Shadow. The Shadow hears all of this. "Krueger is weakening. Watch this light." The hapless prisoner is about to reveal what little he knows. Then, he screams and falls dead. The light over his chair at the hideout fades. "Krueger talked too much. His light has gone out." The Shadow fades away in another hum of electricity.

At headquarters, criminologist Robert Raymond takes an interest in the case. There had been no shot, but the police have found, still warm, a disc "like one of the electrodes that they use in the death house."

"That's exactly what it is. The man was electrocuted."

"Electrocuted? Impossible! Where are the wires?"

"The diabolical genius who conceived this had no need of wires. That man was killed by a radio death ray!"

Later, Raymond questions Bradley, president of Empire, about the interference. Bradley refers him to Steinbeck, who explains that some strange influence prevented them from broadcasting. Jerome, Empire vice-president, who had been in the radio business, believes, however, that the interference is an inside job. Steinbeck is quick to point out that he has found Jerome working with the radio equipment, and that The Shadow's attacks began at about the time Jerome bought into the company. Jerome stalks out.

In Steinbeck's Laboratory adjoining Radio Room.
L. to R.: Bradley, Raymond, Jerome and Steinbeck.

Raymond seeks a motive for the attacks. Bradley can provide none; he is more concerned over the fears of his employees. Jack Foster points out that every truck attacked carried waxworks for Professor Strang's "House of Mystery". Raymond is immediately interested. He knows, by reputation,

Professor Adam Strang, the magician. "If I had some means to pay him a visit . . ." Jack easily arranges the means. They go to the "House of Mystery" where Jack is astounded by the life-like moving mannequins on display there. Then he encounters the most life-like of all — and she introduces herself as Vera Strang, daughter of the professor. Jack identifies Raymond as "Stevens, our insurance adjuster." Strang watches and listens from a hidden chamber, then goes to join them. He and Raymond discuss

the smashed waxwork while Jack takes a look around. Strang hears an electronic alarm, quickly excuses himself, and runs back. Foster has heard the sound of his electronic equipment and is searching for it. Strang strikes him down as he peers through a slot in the door to an inner room. He closes a cover over the slot, then makes it appear as though one of his moving wax figures had been accidently activated to knock Jack out.

Vera appears and agrees to support her father's story. Strang apologizes for the "accident", and Raymond takes Jack off, supposedly to a doctor. He is convinced that Strang deliberately attacked Foster. Then Strang shows Vera an envelope he had taken from the pocket of "Stevens". It is addressed to "Mr. Robert Raymond" whom Strang knows as the world famous detective.

A newspaper carrying the story of the case and announcing that Raymond has ordered an exhaustive search of the Empire warehouse is read by Jasper Slade and another convict in their prison cell. They speculate about the possibility that The Whispering Shadow may know their secret. Slade is determined to escape: "We risked our necks to get the stuff, didn't we? Well, I'll risk mine again to keep it!" He is able to reach the outer wall as a train passes near the prison, then makes a dangerous leap to a passing freight car.

Raymond, after settling Strang's claim against Empire, returns the crated wax figure to the "House of Mystery" and leaves. Strang feels Raymond has some strong reason to risk a second visit, and decides to make an equally dangerous move: "I strike at the warehouse tonight!" He ignores Vera's warnings, for: "The prize is the world's richest collection of jewels!" Strang leaves, dressed in a cloak and slouch hat like that of the image of The Whispering Shadow. Then, the crate opens and Jack Foster crawls out. He runs to where Raymond waits to tell him: "He's planning to attack the warehouse tonight!"

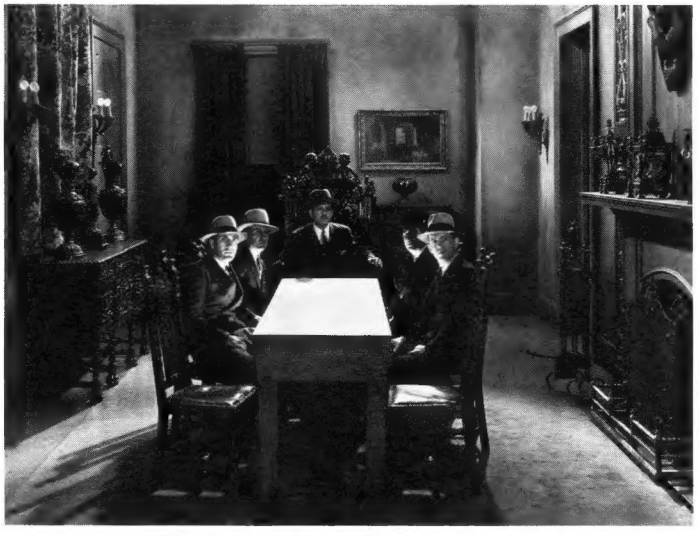
"We'll be waiting for him — and we'll capture The Whispering Shadow."

* * *

The Shadow speaks to his men: "You all understand my orders?"

"We understand 'em."

"Remember, they will be on the lookout for us. The place will be well guarded. Nothing must go amiss. **I will be there.**"



The Shadow's secret "instruction room".
L. ro R.: Actor, Jack Perrin, Lloyd Whitlock, actor and Tom London.

Raymond has guards at every entrance to the building. Both Bradley and Jerome are stopped, but each is allowed to go to his office.

Guard, Jerome, Jack and Raymond at entrance of EMPIRE TRANSPORT AND STORAGE COMPANY.

Strang, now disguised as a workman, follows Jerome. Slade comes out of a trunk and searches through the goods in storage. Strang watches.

Sparks announces that the radio interference has appeared again. Steinbeck says it seems to be trouble with the aerial. He sends Sparks to the roof to check the towers: ". . . and don't go locking yourself out on the roof again." Sparks fights the roof-top door until he is able to prop it open, then climbs one of the aerial masts. He freezes at the sound of a powerful engine coming at him. An autogyro is descending toward the roof! Sparks drops down and runs inside — leaving the door still propped open. He runs through the halls calling for help, but is suddenly struck down by a shadowy figure.

The aircraft lands and Shadow henchmen climb out, noting that their plan is working: the door is open. Inside, Slade discovers the package he seeks, but Strang covers him and seizes it. The Shadow men, in turn, arrive to grab it from Strang.

A guard runs up to tell Raymond of finding the watchman tied in the basement. Raymond orders him to sound the alarm. Jack Foster sees the Shadow men and chases them to the roof where they are about to board their autogyro. He battles them, but is knocked over the edge of the roof. Jack holds on, then pulls himself back. He leaps to the rising autogyro to continue his battle with the thugs.

Suddenly, the blades strike the antenna wires. The ship dives and crashes into a huge aerial tower!

TO BE CONCLUDED

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ERRATUM AND ADDENDA

Les Adams' interview with Sammy Baugh (pg. 397) was extremely interesting. However, upon close inspection of the stunt, it seems to be **not** Tom Steele sliding down from the oil derrick . . . but David Sharpe!

Fred Fredericks
Eastham, Mass.

(Writer's Note: Based on personal memory of the scene, I'm inclined to agree. If it turns out that way, it's probably because Baugh and Steele watched it together and 33 years later Sam connects Steele with the actual stunt. Plus the fact that Steele was introduced to Sam as "your double", he had more time spent with Steele and Steele, being closer to the same size, probably stepped in on most of the mid-action, medium shots.

Pauline Moore's husband was, strictly speaking, a cartoonist (rather than a newspaperman or writer as recalled by Baugh) named Jefferson Machamer. His best remembered work was a single-cartoon strip called "Gals and Gags"; and an 8-panel strip called "Hollywood Husband", which was about what it sounds like: the husband stays home and minds the kids, house, etc. while the wife becomes a movie star.)

Les Adams
Lubbock, Texas

* * *

Re: KING OF THE TEXAS RANGERS (pg. 394, col. one). Add Charles Whittaker to the cast list. He was briefly in the first chapter, as a heavy killed, or at least wounded, in the Mexican cantina.

Bill Lazear
Ashland, Kentucky

* * *

Jimmy Thornton's THE GREEN HORNET article was enjoyable, but his research on the pulp magazines is suspect. In his article he states confidently: "Street & Smith (who published The Shadow and The Spider . . .) added The Green Hornet to their vast array of pulp magazines." Dead wrong! While the Hornet might have made an admirable pulp hero the character was **never** published in that form. Furthermore, although Street & Smith did indeed put out The Shadow magazine, The Spider was an imitation of The Shadow (albeit a superb one) and was created and published by Henry Steeger's Popular Publications, Street & Smith's arch-rival in the pulp circulation wars.

Interestingly, other serial champions who did appear briefly in the pulps included The Lone Ranger, Tailspin Tommy and Flash Gordon. The Lone Ranger appeared in 1937 in eight issues of his own magazine and Tailspin Tommy and Flash Gordon appeared in 1936-37, both in two-issue failures. Those mags cost a mere dime back in the thirties but they're collectors' items now and I've seen them listed at $20 and more a copy.

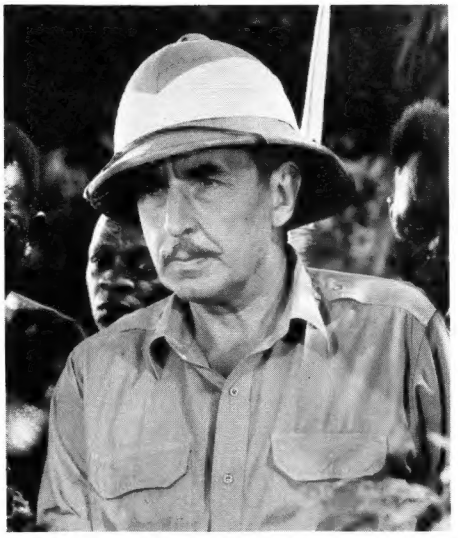
Don Hutchison
Toronto, Ontario

Instead of Crescent Pictures releasing Buck Jones' features thru Columbia, it should read Coronet Pictures (pg. 391).

John Stoginski
Chicago, Illinois

(Editor's Note: The error lies not with the author of the article, but rather the editor.)

NECROLOGY



Douglass Dumbrille died 4/2/74 at the age of 84. He was noted primarily as a suave menace and appeared in KING OF THE MOUNTIES (1942) and, photo, JUNGLE QUEEN (Univ., '45).

Jerry Mezerow
Placentia, Calif.

THE PHANTOM EMPIRE

I have a 1938 Gene Autry song book. Here are some of the songs from THE PHANTOM EMPIRE (TEMI, pgs. 40 and 41): "I'm Getting a Moon's Eye View of the World", "Just Come on Back", "I'm Oscar — I'm Pete", "Uncle Noah's Ark" and "My Cross-eyed Gal". Latter is written by Jimmy Long and Autry. All others are by Autry and Smiley Burnette.

John Stoginski
Chicago, Ill.

At TEMI's request, Neil Shaver, **winner** of last year's HOUSTONCON Costume Contest, has sent along the above photo. (L. to R.) Bill Benedict, Kirk Alyn, Shaver as "Don del Oro", runner-up winners "Dr. Phibes", "The Phantom of the Opera" and Frank Coghlan, Jr. (Pictures taken by Jon Bradshaw Photography). Note: Alyn, Benedict and Coghlan will be attending CON '74.

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BLACK ORACLE, issue No. 7, is now available and features coverage on the "Star Trek" stage play "One Cube or Two?", reviews of "Lost Horizon" and Kirk Douglas version of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" as well as "A Chat with Vincent Price"; current movie and book reviews, poetry, artwork and many more items of interest. Sent 45¢ for the current issue or $1.25 for a three issue subscription to GEORGE STOVER, P.O. Box 10005, Baltimore, Maryland 21204.

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